

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being cancelled.

Claims 2-17 and 19-34 are currently being amended.

Claims 35 and 36 are currently being added.

This amendment amends and adds claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-36 are now pending in this application.

Objection to the Title:

In the Office Action, the title of the invention was objected to as not being descriptive. By way of this amendment and reply, a more descriptive title is being submitted for consideration.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 18-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,577,172 to Vatland et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,373,585 to Mastie; and claims 6-17 and 23-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vatland et al. in view of Mastie, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,891,632 to Schwartz. These rejections are traversed with respect to the presently pending claims, for at least the reasons given below.

In its rejection of claim 1, the Office Action correctly recognizes that Vatland does not expressly disclose a RIP distribution control capable of making the raster image processing distributed among and performed by a print client and a print controller, but the Office Action incorrectly asserts that Mastie discloses these features.

In particular, as seen in Figure 1 of Mastie and as described in column 8 of Mastie, RIP processing is performed by one or more of a plurality of printer controllers 8a, 8b, 8c in a

load balancing manner. Thus, while RIP processing is distributed among a plurality of printer controllers in the system of Mastie, there is no teaching or suggestion in Mastie of performing any of the RIP processing by a print client that actually created the PDL data based on a print request by a user. In other words, none of Mastie's clients 4a, 4b, 4c are involved in the distributed RIP processing.

Accordingly, since claim 1 explicitly recites that the RIP distribution control means makes the raster image processing distributed among and performed by the print client and the printer controller, and since the combination of Vatland and Mastie, at best, teaches distributed RIP processing only among a plurality of printer controllers, claim 1 is patentable over the combination of those two references.

Presently pending independent claim 18 recites similar features (as a method claim) as those discussed above with respect to claim 1, and thus claim 18 is also patentable over the combination of Vatland and Mastie.

The presently pending dependent claims under rejection are patentable due to their respective dependencies on either base claim 1 or base claim 18, as well as for the specific features recited in those dependent claims.

For example, with respect to claim 4, that claim recites that the RIP distribution control means distributes the raster image processing based on RIP host data which is data related to the processing performance of the print client. In column 6, lines 29-31 of Mastie, on the other hand, which is cited against claim 4, all possible RIP engines in the network printing system are provided in a table, whereby those RIP engines correspond to the plurality of printer controllers 8a, 8b, 8c, and whereby no print clients are included in that table.

Accordingly, claim 4 is patentable for this additional reason.

With respect to claim 7, the combination of Vatland, Mastie and Schwartz would, at best teach the use of a plurality of printer controllers for performing RIP processing, and not a plurality of print clients (that create PDL data) for performing RIP processing.

Accordingly, claim 7 is patentable for this additional reason.

With respect to claim 17 and 34, those claims recite the transmitting of the RIP host data thus collected to the RIP host data part at periodic times. In its rejection of claim 17, the Office Action asserts that column 8, lines 9-13 of Mastie discloses the printer manager 6

processing the RIPper table to determine if any enable RIPpers are in a READY state, and if so, then the PDL is sent to that RIPper. However, this portion of Mastie does not teach or suggest the outputting of RIP host data periodically by each print client member, and thus claims 17 and 34 are patentable over the cited art of record for this additional reason.

New Claims:

New claims 35 and 36 have been added to recite features described on page 36 of the specification with respect to the downloading of an RIP module from a printer controller to a print client under certain conditions, whereby such features are not believed to be taught or suggested by the cited art of record, alone or in combination.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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